

# A successful student and sincere human being passes away

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Once again the temporal nature of this worldly life sent me a strong reminder when I learned that my sincere and dear disciple Maulawī Kaleemuddin Sultanpuri's destined time had arrived and he had gone off to Generous Lord's embrace of mercy. **إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ** <sup>1</sup>! Maulawī Kaleemuddin had for a long time been an employee with the Department of Journalism at Bahrain Consulate in Mumbai.

Death as always keeps surprising and astounding. It cares not about the age of the subject, nor the place, nor about health. While a man is in the middle of his daily, busy schedule, death makes an unannounced visit laying to ruins all the dreams and plans of future.

لائی حیات آئے، قضا لے چلی، چلے  
نہ اپنی خوشی سے آئے نہ اپنی خوشی چلے

The call of life brought me in, the herald of death took me away,  
Neither was my arrival by my consent nor was my departure.

This mystery of life and death has continued to baffle even those who walk around in planetary orbits and those who claim to have solved the mysteries of this universe. They are as clueless as anybody else about what would happen in the next moment, notwithstanding their supply of provisions for the next hundred years. You could be the President or a Minister, you could be a wealthy tycoon or a pauper, but you cannot run away from death nor can you know in advance its time of arrival. Continuity belongs to Allāh alone:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ (26) وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ (27)

*Everyone on earth has to perish. (Only) your Lord's Countenance shall remain, full of majesty, full of honor.*<sup>2</sup>

Kaleemuddin Sultanpuri, Ashfaq Sultanpuri and Anis Jaunpuri were like the three corners of a triangle: inter-connected, age-mates and sharing similar temperament and worldview. Being alumni of Madrasah Badrul Islām at Shahganj further cemented their mutual friendship. They had got quite close to me when I was a teacher at Dārul 'Uloom Deoband and editor of 'Arabic fortnightly Ad Dā'i.

<sup>1</sup> To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. (Qurān 2:156)

<sup>2</sup> Qurān, 55:26-27

Kaleemuddin used to visit me to practice 'Arabic language and with hard work and dedication he honed his linguistic skills. He was then attracted to learning English where too he got fairly accomplished. His proficiency in both 'Arabic and English opened for him the doors of employment in various companies and finally he got a permanent job at Bahrain consulate.

In recent years, he had been in great demand for teaching 'Arabic in English schools. As a result, he continued working at Mumbai (even after retiring from the consulate), staying there with his brothers and other relations. He also had a short tenure as teacher at Maulānā Badruddīn Ajmal's Markazul Ma'ārif.

His wife had died some time back, so had his mother with whom he had come here recently for Haj. He himself had been suffering from kidney-failure. After a surgery to transplant his sister's kidney into his body, his health had seen improvement and his sense of sickness had faded. Yet now, his association with life is no more!

A funny incident during his Haj journey is worth mentioning. He visited the library situated at the birth-place of Allāh's Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ where he liked a book. He started taking notes from it and kept returning and re-visiting for this purpose. Watching him there for several days, a donkey-headed guard there warned him: "You keep coming here again and again. I sense the disease of Shirk in you<sup>3</sup>." Baffled and dumbfounded, he sat down holding his head.

In his circle, Kaleemuddin was considered amiable, good-natured and witty. His friend Ashfaq was even wittier while the third of the trio Anis was known more for his sober nature and dedication towards job at hand.

For now, Anis alone remains behind to grieve over his other two friends. I pray to Allāh to grant both the deceased place in Jannah and the delights of the Hereafter. Āmīn.

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<sup>3</sup> Shirk means considering somebody an associate or partner of Allāh. The mushriks (shirk-practitioners) of all times have shown great reverence to places associated with prophets, walis and saints. The Muslims in the land of Monotheism have been at times over-sensitive about this. The story is such an example.